IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims as follows:

1. (original) A sintered object of silicon monoxide for use as a material for forming silicon oxide thin films, the evaporation residue of which object, as determined by subjecting a sample thereof to thermogravimetry at a heating temperature of 1,300°C and in a vacuum atmosphere, namely at a pressure of not higher than 10 Pa, is not more than 4% by mass relative to the sample before measurement.

2. (original) A sintered object of silicon monoxide according to Claim 1, wherein, in the thermogravimetry, the heating temperature is controlled within the range of 1,300°C ± 50°C.

3. (original) A method of producing sintered objects of silicon monoxide for use as materials for forming silicon oxide thin films which comprises sintering SiO particles having a particle diameter of not smaller than 250 μm, either after press forming thereof or during press forming thereof, in a non-oxygen atmosphere.

4. (original) A method of producing sintered objects of silicon monoxide according to Claim 3, wherein the press forming is carried out while applying a load of 300 to 1,500 kg per cm^2 of SiO particles.

5. (original) A method of producing sintered articles of silicon monoxide according to Claim 3, wherein the pressing is carried out under a load of 100 to 300 kg per cm^2 of SiO particles.

6. (currently amended) A method of producing sintered object of silicon monoxide according to ~~any of Claims 3 to 5~~ Claim 3, wherein the sintering is carried out in a vacuum atmosphere.

7. (new) A method of producing sintered object of silicon monoxide according to Claim 4, wherein the sintering is carried out in a vacuum atmosphere.

8. (new) A method of producing sintered object of silicon monoxide according to Claim 5, wherein the sintering is carried out in a vacuum atmosphere.